

Fray Pedro Ibanez on St. Teresa of Avila's Experiences

1. The end of God is to bring a soul to Himself, and that of the devil is to separate it from God. Our Lord never uses means that separate one from Him, nor the devil those that bring one to God. All the visions and other things that take place in her draw her nearer to God, and make her more humble, obedient, etc.
2. It is the teaching of Saint Thomas and of all the saints that the angel of light is recognized by the peace and quiet he leaves in the soul. Never does she have these things without great peace and joy afterwards, so much that all the pleasures of the earth put together seem to her not like the least of them.
3. She has no fault or imperfection for which she is not reprehended by the one who speaks within her.
4. Never did she ask or desire these things, except to accomplish in everything the will of God our Lord.
5. All the things he tells her go according to the divine Scripture and to what the Church teaches, and are very true in all scholastic rigor.
6. She has great purity of soul, great sincerity, most fervent desires to please God, and on the other hand, to trample under foot anything there may be of the world.
7. They have told her that all she should ask of God, being just, she would have. Much she has asked, and things not to be written here, for they would take too long, and our Lord has granted them all.
8. When these things are of God, they are always ordained for the good of oneself, or the community, or someone. She has experience of her improvement, and of that of many other persons.
9. No one speaks with her, unless of depraved disposition, without being moved to devotion by her affairs, even though she doesn't tell them.
10. Each day she goes on increasing in the perfection of her virtues, and they always teach her things of greater perfection. And so, in all her course of time, she has gone on improving, in her visions themselves, in the way Saint Thomas mentions.
11. Never do they tell her novelties, but things of edification, nor do they tell her nonsensical things. Some persons they have told her were full of devils; but only so she might understand what a soul is like when it has mortally offended God.
12. It is the devil's way, when he tries to deceive people, to advise them to keep silent about what he tells them; but they have told her to communicate it to learned men who are servants of the Lord, and that if she concealed it, the devil might perhaps deceive her.
13. The improvement of her soul with these things is great, and the good edification she gives with her example, so that more than forty nuns in her house practice recollection.
14. These things ordinarily come to her after long mental prayer, and while very absorbed in God and inflamed with His love, or communicating.
15. These things give her the greatest desire to be right, and not to be deceived by the devil.

16. They cause the most profound humility in her; she knows that what she receives is from the hand of the Lord, and how little she has of her own.
17. When she is without those things, things which occur are in the habit of causing her pain and trouble; when that comes, there is no memory of anything, but only a great desire to suffer, and she enjoys this so much that it is astonishing.
18. They make her rejoice and console herself with trials, murmurings against her, sicknesses, and she has terrible ones, too, of the heart, and vomitings, and many other afflictions, all of which leave her when she has the visions.
19. With all this she does very great penance, with fasting, discipline, and mortifications.
20. Both the things of earth that can give her some pleasure, and the trials, of which she has endured many, she bears with equal mind, without losing the peace and quiet of her soul.
21. She has such firm purpose of not offending the Lord, that she has taken a vow never to leave undone anything she understands to be more perfect, or anything she is told by any who so understands; and although she holds those of the Company (of Jesus) to be saints, and thinks that through their means our Lord has granted her so many favors, she told me that if she knew it was greater perfection not to consult them, she would never again speak with them or see them, even though it was they who have quieted her and set her feet on the road of these things.
22. The love she has for God, and her feeling of His presence and being dissolved in His love, is certainly astonishing, and with them she is accustomed to be enraptured almost all day.
23. When she hears God spoken of with strong devotion, she is often likely to be enraptured, and not to be able to resist, how hard she tries, and then she remains in such a state that it causes the greatest devotion in those who see her.
24. She cannot endure that anyone converse with her who does not tell her her faults and reprehend her, which she receives with great humility.
25. With these things she cannot tolerate it when those who are in a state of perfection do not try to live according to their rule.
26. She is wholly free from affection for relatives, from wishing to speak with people, a friend of solitude; has great devotion to the saints and on their feasts and mysteries which the Church holds up to view, is filled with the greatest tenderness for our Lord.
27. If all those of the Company and all the servants of God on earth tell her, or should tell her, that it is the devil, she fears and trembles before her visions commence; but once she is in mental prayer and recollection, she will not be persuaded that it is anyone but God who is with her and speaks with her, even if they cut her into a thousand pieces.
28. God has given her so strong and valorous a spirit that it is astonishing. She used to be timid; now she tramples all the demons under foot. She is quite beyond the trifles and silly foolery of women. Quite free from scruples. Is utterly honest.
29. With this our Lord has given her the gift of most happy tears, great compassion for those about her, knowledge of her own faults, much regard for good persons, and abasement of herself. And I say, certainly, that she has helped many persons, and I am one of them.
30. Commonly keeps God in mind and is aware of His presence.

31. They have told her nothing (in her raptures) that has not been so and has not come to pass, and this is a very strong argument.
32. These things cause her an admirable clarity of understanding, and an illumination in the things of God.
33. That they told her to look into the Scriptures and that it would be found that no soul that desired to please God had been deceived so long a time.